TEF Year Four Provider Submission

Provider Context

The City of Liverpool College Group is one of the leaders in Further Education, and a key provider of skills and training across the Liverpool City Region. With an annual turnover of approximately £40m, *c.*1,000 apprentices and 10,000 enrolments each year from across the Liverpool City Region, the group provides wide-ranging services to employers, other providers and students.

At the heart of the group is The City of Liverpool College. The College is the only general Further Education (FE) College within the city of Liverpool and the largest FE College in the city region. The College serves the people of the Liverpool City Region, supporting employers in creating a skilled workforce as 'the college for business', responding to economic priorities and drivers for growth and supporting our students to achieve and progress in either education or employment.

The College recruits from 30 of the most 100 deprived areas in England; 94% of our students go on to education or employment. We believe that the socio-economic character of our student body makes high aspirations more important, not less, and that every student who stays with us should be supported to achieve and progress.

The College's £100m campus, located within the city's Knowledge Quarter, offers students access to an extensive range of training, learning and leisure facilities.

Our mission is to provide high quality skills and education by delivering opportunities for growth to all people and businesses of the Liverpool City Region.

Higher Education Provision – Background Information

The Higher Education (HE) provision and strategy for growth is aligned to the Liverpool City Region's Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and its priorities for economic growth being driven across key sectors of: Low Carbon Economy, Knowledge Economy, Visitor Economy and Superport. The College is actively participating in the National Union of Students' (NUS's) Green Impact Initiative, achieving the Bronze Award in 17/18 and currently working towards the Silver Award. This initiative underpins the College's current Sustainability Policy.
The City of Liverpool College has a long established and successful HE provision, with commendations outcome at the last QAA review in 2016, and with the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) gold standard awarded in June 2017. The College is one of the leaders in FE, achieving the good Ofsted rating in October 2017, and a key delivery vehicle of skills across the Liverpool City Region and beyond.

The City of Liverpool College offers a medium size HE provision with direct funding status. The College has recruited over 500 HE students studying a range of over 30 undergraduate programmes at levels 4, 5 and 6. The College also offers Initial Teacher Training programme at the master's level. The curriculum offer has broadly developed in response to demand.

The College's HE programmes recruit predominantly local students, from the Liverpool City Region with the majority of HE students (70%) from IMD Q1 and Q2, ranked as the most deprived of England's 39 LEP areas on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015.

The College actively engages with national and local initiatives that support and widen access to HE recruiting 54% of our HE students from the Polar3 Q1 and Q2 areas with the lowest level of progression onto HE. The College is a member of Shaping Futures (also known as the Merseyside Collaborative Outreach Programme, part of the wider NCOP). This outreach

programme for the Liverpool City Region is formed by 12 local HE providers and led by the University of Liverpool.

The College delivers the following HE programmes: Foundation Degrees awarded by two partner HEI's: Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) validating three Foundation Degrees: Leisure and Tourism; Leisure and Hospitality; Early Years; and Open University (OU) validating Foundation Degrees: Popular Music; Dental Technology; BA (Hons) in Games Design and Concept Art and BA (Hons) Top up In Popular Music; Sports; Computing and Early Years. The suite of teacher education programmes is awarded by the University of Huddersfield (UHU).

A range of Higher National qualifications, HNC/Ds are offered in 2018-19, and are awarded by Pearson: Acting; Dance; Musical Theatre; Music Production; Game Design; Computing and Systems Development; Construction; Building Services Engineering; Electrical and Electronic Engineering; Manufacturing and General Engineering; Applied Chemistry; Applied Biology; Sports; Business; Health and Social Care; Hospitality Management.

The College's HE strategic plan focuses on HE provision and is developed within the College's strategic overarching framework. It is set in line with the UK HE funding, quality and admissions guidance and the requirements set by the OfS regulatory guidance.

Key Higher Education Strategy Goals:

1. To provide higher level skills for employment and economic growth in line with the Liverpool City Region LEP priorities and in collaboration with local employers, with the view to having a positive impact on economic growth and development of our students' employability and enterprise skills;
2. To strive for excellence by offering enhanced learning opportunities and outstanding quality of provision, that is informed by active student engagement;
3. To respond to the needs of local learners and support widening access to HE for a diverse student population.

Consequently, the College HE provision is supporting development of those skills required by the region's economy, traditionally seen as a service sector and knowledge economy, with financial and professional services, manufacturing, and creative and digital industries providing the majority of local employment.

The College is achieving goal 1 of its HE strategy through a range of initiatives, including:

1.1 Demand-led HE Curriculum based on programme design, development and approval processes that are reliant on working in partnership with local employers who are leaders in their chosen sectors;
1.2 Academic staff are recruited with the highest professional standards (meeting the UKPSF) and with relevant experience and expertise in the sector;
1.3 Effective partnerships are established with leading HE institutions and awarding and professional bodies, which will strengthen the College's strategic aim to drive high-quality, high impact provision;
1.4 Students' employability and enterprise skills are developed to support and increase their sustainable employment and career opportunities.

The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that measure the impact of these initiatives in achieving goal one include destination of leavers data, student survey data and feedback from employers as a requirement in the HE curriculum development processes.

Goal 2 is achieved through the following initiatives:

2.1 Establishment of effective HE management and communication lines ensuring clear allocation of responsibility and oversight of HE academic standards;
2.2 Adopting a strategic focus on designing, maintaining and reviewing enhanced quality systems for all HE programmes;
2.3 Student involvement is established throughout their educational journey;
2.4 Established strategic and deliberate initiatives that focus on designing and maintaining enhanced learning opportunities through innovative teaching and learning strategies;
2.5 Active support for development of individual learning with enhanced access to learning opportunities through the College's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE);
2.6 HE ethos is established throughout the HE community of staff by supporting staff in developing high level skills and pedagogies through extensive staff development and scholarly and research activities;
2.5 Working collaboratively and proactively with our HE university partners to maximise students' learning experience, enhance staff development opportunities and to maintain a high level of academic standards;
2.6 Reviewing and continuously upgrading and developing learning resources and accommodation that is fit for purpose and supports enhanced learning opportunities;
2.7 Embedding effective observation systems for teaching, learning and assessment, based on UK professional standards;
2.8 Establishing annual planning of thorough and comprehensive assessments and processes that meet and exceed the awarding organisations' requirements and embed feedback for students to support high levels of achievement and progression;
2.9 Utilising effective engagement of external examiners to inform assessment and moderation processes, as well as aspects of HE programme design and developments;
2.10 Establishing transparent, accurate and accessible information on our HE programmes to inform current and potential students and staff of the programme's content and quality systems.

The KPIs that measure the impact of these initiatives in achieving goal two include annual HE planning and review systems**,** resulting in continuous growth and sustained high quality provision. The KPIs relating to quality of HE programmes are reviewed through the year as part of the performance and annual monitoring review**,** resulting in high levels of performance. Both retention and achievement targets are set at 90%. We expect high levels of students' satisfaction. All HE students have an opportunity to engage with the internal NSS survey, while only a small number of eligible students engage with the external survey. Positive responses to NSS survey questions are expected to be above 90%. Any NSS question with a response lower than 85% is followed up at the focus group meetings and students' views are used to inform our action where applicable. This approach of full HE cohort engagement in providing the feedback and structured follow up action has resulted in the high overall levels of students' satisfaction, see Appendix 1.

Other KPIs are in place to ensure goal 2 is achieved. Effective annual monitoring and auditing of implemented VLE quality standards and levels of VLE access are used to ensure full compliance with the set requirements**.** Assessment, moderation and external examination are standardised and assessed by external examiners indicating that set processes ensure full compliance with the set requirements**.**

The College annual Observation of Teaching and Learning (OTL) activities are robust and effective. These are based on the HE relevant criteria, set in line with the UKPSF. Results of OTL indicate effective and innovative teaching and learning is in place - as identified in the OTL reports, see Appendix 4**.** All members of staff teaching on HE programmes are engaging

with regular and relevant scholarly and research activities**,** (see Appendix 5), resulting in a positive impact on the quality of learning experience **-** as verified by the high levels of satisfaction; see in-house student survey responses, Appendix 1, Q1-Q4.

Goal 3 is achieved through a range of initiatives including:

3.1 Actively engaging in recruiting students from the socio-economic and postal codes groups (cold spots) with low level of progression to HE;
3.2 Offering financial support (bursaries and hardship fund) to enable access and retention on HE programmes for those learners who experience financial difficulties;
3.3 Offering enhanced pastoral learning support for all students and additional individualised support for students identified as disadvantaged;
3.4 Offering internal progression bursaries and support for those FE leavers within the college who do not initially engage with the HE progression opportunities;
3.5 Actively participating as a member of the National (Merseyside) Network for Collaborative Outreach (MNCO)**,** to maximise the recruitment and promotion of the HE provision;
3.6 Having transparent, fair and effectively managed application processes in place**.**

The KPIs that measure the impact of those initiatives in achieving goal three include meeting targets relating to recruitment, retention / success and achievement of students from disadvantaged categories, as stated in the Access Agreement.

Teaching Quality

Impact and effectiveness of involving students in teaching evaluation e.g. collecting and acting on their feedback

The College is committed to working with staff, students and other stakeholders to articulate, systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices, so that every student is enabled to develop as an independent learner, study their chosen subject(s) in depth and enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking.

The College's Higher Education Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy outlines principles of learning and teaching for HE programmes. The strategic approach is focusing on development of independent learning skills, offer of flexible learning opportunities and promote research - based teaching and learning activities. Students are actively involved in programme design, delivery and evaluation and provide their feedback in a number of ways: via an in-house NSS questions based survey that involves all HE students, including those on a short programme who would not be eligible for the external survey. Student representatives attend Board of Study meetings and all HE students are invited to attend focus group meetings and engage with the module feedback activity. 93% of HE students feel that they have had an opportunity to provide feedback on their course (NSS in house questionnaire- question 23; Appendix 1).

Impact and effectiveness of feedback initiatives aimed at supporting students' development, progression and achievement is evident form the high level of continuation rates, as reported in the TEF Y4 core matrix at 86.5%, which is at the top 10% of all providers' performance.

HE students are represented by their student representatives, elected for each course. One of the student reps is an elected member of the Student Union Executive. Students are included in other College-level meetings, such as student staff committee meetings organised by collaborative university partners and focus group meetings, organised by the College.

Collaborative university partners take an active role in engaging with the students and in including College students in the relevant decision making processes.

Impact and effectiveness of schemes focused on monitoring and maximising students' engagement with their studies, such as the UK Engagement Survey (UKES) and others

As part of our commitment to supporting excellence in learning and teaching on HE programmes, the College introduced the Learning Gain initiative in 2017-18 as a method of supporting and measuring learning gain in relation to students' personal development and employability skills gained during their time spent in HE at the College. The College is also closely monitoring initiatives relating to the UK Engagement Survey (UKES). Some of the key questions are discussed at the focus group meetings, including questions relating to interaction with staff and staff/student partnership. The College results compare favourably in relation to the national trends. UKES latest three years' data report from 2017 is indicating that 33% to 36% students are spending time interacting with staff. Feedback from the College students is indicating much higher levels of interaction and collaboration with staff. We recognise that this is encouraging given that student collaboration with staff has been identified as a key driver of skills development.

In terms of skills, the nation's UKES report results shows a clear increase in students evidencing the development of soft skills during their time at university. Results from our own College Learning Gain in house survey for 2017-18 identified the following personal developments made by students during their time spent in HE: an increased understanding of personal values (82%), more ability towards understanding others (91%), an understanding of how to become an active citizen (89%), and how to explore complex real world problems (83%).

Impact and effectiveness of innovative approaches, new technology or educational research

The College's approach to supporting innovation and excellence in teaching and learning starts from the Teaching and Learning Strategy and is supported with the set of rigorous standards specified in the OTL criteria based on the UKPSF and related staff development, research and scholarly activities.

Flipped learning and a range of innovative teaching approaches are implemented throughout HE curriculum. The Higher Education Scheme of Work template is designed to support the planning process**,** where innovative and inspirational teaching and transformational, independent learning can take place, to provide enhanced learning opportunities supported by effective assessment.

In addition to the specific HE CPD provided at HE development events, all College lecturers access weekly dedicated CPD time. This time is coordinated within curriculum teams and covers a wide range of topics. Most topics covered are applicable to the enhancement of HE provision, and support the teaching and learning of HE students.

The CPD may be formal, and delivered to all HE staff, or it may be more directly tailored to smaller groups of lecturers, or it may involve one-to-one CPD support tailored to individuals. Most common among these are: Master's Degree; PhD; conference; research events; awareness sessions (disability, Prevent) ; improvement of teaching and learning; embedding maths and English; UK Professional Standards for HE; online learning; safeguarding; HE level descriptors; HEA/AHE Fellowship standards; Innovative approaches to T&L.

The College MY CPD on line programme aims to develop a learning community that links all College staff together in a collaborative and innovative approach. A new VLE, MY CPD has been created to support this programme.

The MY CPD cycle begins with each member of staff completing their PDP before an appraisal meeting in late August or early September. All staff are expected to complete 42 credits of CPD on an annual basis, pro-rata. The 42 credits minimum CPD requirement is split into cross-college mandatory and optional training:

- 12 mandatory credits which includes cross college delivered sessions and online CPD
- 30 optional credits – e.g. online, teaching squares, internal, external

Impact and effectiveness of teaching observation schemes

All teaching staff undergo annual teaching observations which are formally recorded. The College collects and analyses relevant teaching and learning information – OTL reports and curriculum review reports. These are used to identify staff development needs and individual support. Staff development needs are identified at appraisal. Students evaluate the quality of teaching and learning via student surveys and module feedback. This feedback is used to monitor the quality of teaching and support and to identify where other action may be required**,** to ensure that a high quality experience for all students is in place - see Appendix 4.

The College has recently revised the learning observation process (September 2018). The HE learning observation criteria has been taken from the UKPSF.

Peer observation is well implemented within HE teams. The aim of the peer observation is to provide constructive and developmental feedback to HE staff around some key HE observation themes that are chosen to support and drive implementation of the College's enhancement strategy. The key HE observation topics/themes are chosen to support and drive implementation of the College's enhancement strategy focusing on:

- Questioning
- Stretch & Challenge
- Co-operative Learning
- Differentiation
- Pace
- Links to Employability
- Use of Technology

HE staff are encouraged to participate in a small scale research project within their teams or to work with other teams within the College. The aim of the project is to encourage staff to engage in scholarly activity which links to the development of teaching and learning within their subject area and is presented at an annual College Research Event. The quality of research in the College was recognised externally via the *Research Engaged College Award* from the National Foundation for Educational Research, NFER.

Impact and effectiveness of external examining

External examiner (EE) reports are presented at the Board of Study meetings, and they are included in the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) process with a follow up action plan that is completed for each programme. The EEs action plan is monitored and discussed at the performance review meetings, attended by all HE Programme Leaders and curriculum Heads of School.

It is a College policy to make EEs annual reports available to students, by publishing the reports on the VLE, within the course file section, and by including it in the (AMR), which is also shared with the students. Positive impact of this approach has been evident resulting with all External Examiners' reports identifying wide areas of good practice and strengths with no major issues or blocks on any of the HE programmes.

Recognition of courses by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs)

Academic and professional standards are embedded throughout the College's curriculum. It is evidenced within the approval and validation processes for the programmes that are endorsed and validated by the PSRBS: FD Dental Technology, HNC Building Services Engineering and FD Early Years Practice.

The College is achieving positive outcomes for students, whilst also successfully identifying, addressing and preventing grade inflation by developing, implementing and auditing processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks as articulated within the College's Marking and Moderation Policy for HE programmes. Marking, assessment grading and internal moderation guidelines and regulations are consistently adhered to by those involved in the assessment process. Assessment regulations are applied consistently, checked internally via rigorous moderation processes and checked by external examiners to ensure adequate classification is awarded.

The College operates processes for preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to unacceptable academic practice, to ensure understanding and awareness of what constitutes unacceptable academic practice. College completion and achievement rates are good and stable. The completion rate in 16-17 was at 85.5% with high grades at 55%, and at 87.7% with 54% achieving high grades in 17-18.

Quantitative information on teaching intensity, such as weighted contact hours is demonstrated via annual guided learning hours (GLH) averaging at 451 per FT course in the past three years, with an average FT class size of 12.

Recognition and reward schemes, and their impact and effectiveness, including progression and promotional opportunities for staff based on teaching commitment and performance is evident in the College's staffing structure and promotional opportunities that include leadership and development roles**,** such as the HE Programme Leader role, which comes with additional bonuses.

Quantitative information relating to the qualification, experience and contractual basis of staff who teach is presented in Appendix 5. All HE teaching staff have high levels of relevant industrial experience and the majority are qualified to a minimum of degree level and have a teaching (PGCE) qualification or equivalent or are working towards it. HE teaching staff are contracted to deliver 832 hours of teaching. These hours are reduced to allow remission for research, for teaching at degree level, developmental work, programme leadership, or administrative tasks.

Learning Environment

Initiatives aimed at supporting the transition into and through a HE course

Initiatives are supported partially via NCOP (National Collaborative Outreach Programme) funding. These are aimed at potential HE applicants who are assessed to establish their study and research skills, their maths and English skills and their knowledge of career options. Following the initial assessment these potential applicants are supported to further develop relevant skills so that they are prepared to study at a HE level. Once enrolled on one of the HE programmes a range of sessions and support materials are made available to ensure that students develop research skills, knowledge of correct referencing, writing reports and effective use of on line and other LRC based resources as well as understanding of the progression opportunities following completion of the HE programme. Impact and effectiveness of these initiatives is evident from the high completion rates of our HE students.

Quantitative information demonstrating proportional investment in teaching and learning infrastructure

Proportional investment in teaching and learning infrastructure is evident in all five College sites that accommodate HE provision and provide teaching and learning areas that meet all the requirements in terms of IT, software, hardware, specialist equipment and laboratory equipment required to successfully deliver the programme of study.

Resource requirements are identified and provided during the programme planning and validation stage. The College's IT systems provide essential support for learning. The College has 3,432 computers of which 2,406 are specifically for student use**;** this equates to a ratio of one computer for every 5 students. These are spread across five campuses. In total there are 308 rooms equipped with IT facilities, 129 of which are dedicated IT resource rooms. The College has Learning Resource Centres on each campus**,** the largest of which is in the Learning Exchange (Roscoe Street) and has 86 computers for student use in addition to a 'showcase classroom' equipped with high-end Microsoft Surface tablet equipment. In addition a dedicated 'Digital Academy' containing 220 extremely high specification computers is housed at the Arts Centre with a specific emphasis on games, programming and media development.

Students are given a large quota of 500 free prints at the beginning of each year of their studies and are able to utilise a mix of small format printers and multi-function devices for scanning, photocopying, colour and large format printing. The College delivers 1 GB to the desktop network experience utilising the latest Cisco based technologies**;** delivered via a recent £750k investment. In addition, the College operates an ultra-fast 200Mb Aruba Wi-Fi service that is heavily utilised by students on their own devices**,** with an average connection at any given time of 535 devices.

The College's teaching and learning equipment includes 136 interactive whiteboards and touchscreens with 288 data projectors**,** providing a technology-rich teaching environment. Over 600 tablet devices are also available to students, some of which are dedicated to HE students. College IT systems adhere to a minimum specification for computers that ensure an excellent experience for students. All students have a federated Office 365 account that allows them to undertake their studies from any location**,** with access to 20 GB of direct storage within Office 365 and a further 20 GB of storage internally.

Specialist software facilities include the full suite of Adobe's Creative Cloud with access to all of its high end creative and publishing applications, access to specialist design, animation, gaming and rendering packages - from AutoDesk such as AutoCAD 2015 and Maya and many more industry standard applications. All students have access to the College's Moodle-based VLE, which has been developed in-house to provide students with high-level access to learning resources, group work and assessments.

The College's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) has recently been upgraded and redesigned following 12 months of research and development informed by feedback from students and teachers. The College also received a CoLRiC (Council for Learning Resources in Colleges) Best Practice Award for demonstrating how placing its VLE at the heart of the institution can be used with great effect to showcase LRC resources and to respond to the needs of different students.

The College conducts annual audits of all HE used areas to ensure that specialist equipment, teaching and learning equipment and science laboratory space meet programme requirements. Capital expenditure as well as dedicated HE innovation funds are allocated to support development of resources.

Dedicated laboratories are used for Applied Sciences, Dental Technology, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering and there are specialist facilities for Fashion, Dance, Music, Drama, Sports and Game Design programmes. Fully equipped HE common rooms are now located in all five College centres, in response to students' feedback (focus group meetings).

The HE Strategy Group is considering future plans for enhanced HE identity that may include setting up a University Centre and further expansion of HE dedicated study and social areas.

The College allocates a proportional investment in its teaching and learning and relevant infrastructure of around 50% of HE annual income. Positive impact of all the investment into resources is evident from the high levels of students' satisfaction in relation to their ability to access course specific resources, and positive outcomes in terms of completion and achievement (NSS Q 20).

Impact and effectiveness of initiatives aimed at supporting the transition into and through a HE course is realised through the tutorial support for students. It is structured at group and individual level, ensuring that support for achievement, attainment and progression is consistently implemented. Personal tutorial support is offered to every HE student individually to enable them to discuss and monitor their progress and further their academic development through the provision of regular opportunities to reflect on feedback and engage in dialogue with staff. Students at risk of not achieving their full potential, usually through less than 85% attendance or late submission or non-submission of their assignments, are identified and supported to ensure that they remain on the programme and fully achieve their potential. Tutorials are regularly used to provide guidance and support with destination plans on an individual basis.

Use and effectiveness of learner analytics is used to record the progress and identified action through the College's Promonitor electronic recording and tracking system. Individual tutorial support is implemented**,** enabling every student to monitor their progress and further their academic development through the provision of regular opportunities to reflect on feedback and engage in dialogue with staff. Positive effect of these measures is evident with the high level of retention and achievement, see Appendix 3.

Progression to employment and transition to higher levels of post graduate study are supported by a range of transition initiatives, employment and career events, resulting in the positive DLHE data, see Appendix 2.

Extent and impact of student involvement in, or exposure to, the latest developments in research is evidenced with students being encouraged and supported to develop positive attitudes and relevant research skills. They are awarded for exceptional achievements that demonstrate high level of engagement with the research activities. They are invited to take part in the annual research award competition by submitting outstanding pieces of work that demonstrate their extended and exceptional research activity.

The extent, nature and impact of employer engagement in course design and delivery, including degree apprenticeships, is evidenced through the College's HE programme development and validation process and policy that includes employers' input at key stages of the programme design and development as well as approval.

Student Outcomes and Learning Gain

Learning gain and distance-travelled

Learning gain and distance-travelled for all students including those entering HE part-way through their professional lives is evidenced in the College's approach to teaching, learning and assessment. Focused on initiatives that will further improve student learning and enhance the educational impact of their programmes and focus to enable effective development of

wider, personal and employability skills. The impact and effectiveness of this approach is measured with the Learning Gain (LG) questionnaire.

The selected LG outcomes that are being developed and measured include: critical thinking, moral reasoning, socially responsible leadership, interest in engaging in intellectually challenging work, Interest in political and social involvement, well-being, positive attitude toward literacy, interest in contributing to the arts, interest in contributing to the sciences, openness to engaging new ideas with diverse people, orientation toward interacting with diverse people and academic motivation.

In 2017-18, as part of our commitment to supporting excellence in learning and teaching on HE programmes, the College released a pilot survey linked to understanding and measuring learning gain in relation to the improvement in knowledge, skills, work-readiness and personal development made by students during their time spent in HE. 22% of our HE students responded to the survey and results identified changes in attitudes towards the real world. With regards to employability, 96% agreed that their HE experience had taught them skills contributing to ongoing improvement. 82% agreed that they had acquired employability skills with 84% feeling they could successfully have a business of their own.

With regards to attitudes towards community and society, 98% felt it was important to be able to help others who are in difficulty, 90% wanted to become involved in activities that helped the environment while 81% were interested in volunteering in their community and 87% were interested in being involved in charitable initiatives. 88% wished to help promote racial understanding.

NSS questions 4, 5, 6 and 7 were offered to the full cohort of all HE students, to assess further aspects of the learning gain associated with attitudes towards their study experience and engagement with their studies. Responses to these questions are positive and in the region of 93%-97% levels of satisfaction (Appendix 1, Q 4, 5, 6 and 7).

Impact of initiatives aimed at closing gaps in development, attainment and progression for students from different backgrounds, in particular those from disadvantaged backgrounds or those who are at greater risk of not achieving positive outcomes

All College support services are made available to students on HE programmes irrespective of their age, course or background. However, special consideration is made for students from vulnerable groups (disability, low income). Our College in-house team of specialists are able to support students with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities including, visual impairment, deafness, dyslexia, dyspraxia, Autistic Spectrum Condition, ADHD, mental health and other physical disabilities etc. The College also offer access to counselling for students on HE programmes.

Support for students with disabilities and other specific services are available for students on HE programmes, including:

- Confidential advice, guidance and support to applicants and students with disabilities;
- Guidance on applying for the Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) ;
- Advice on gaining any medical evidence required or an Educational Psychologist Report for DSA application;
- Support in arranging a Needs Assessment and progressing any recommendations;
- Guidance from our dedicated Financial Advice and Support Team in relation to disability specific funding and support;
- Individual academic and learning support tailored to individual HE programmes;

- Access to in-house assisting software and full cost recovery of the current £200 student contribution to DSA software and hardware allocations;
- Advice and guidance to course tutors to promote inclusion and equality.

The following data is available in relation to support for disabled students:

- In 2015-16, 86 HE students declared a disability, of whom 25 (29%) took up the offer of support via the DSA;
- In 2016-17, 73 HE students declared a disability, of whom 25 (11%) took up the offer of support via the DSA. The decrease in number was due to stringent criteria applied by the Student Finance England with regards to awarding DSA to applicants;
- In 2017-18, 67 HE students declared a disability of whom 10 (6.7%) took up the offer of support via DSA. Due to changes in DSA regulations this year, some of the HE students are allocated support from external organisations like Clearlinks, Ranstead etc. This is in line with the SFE new regulations;
- In 2018-19, 109 HE students declared a disability of whom 11 (12%) have taken up the offer of support via DSA.

The College provides a Counselling and Mental Health service, which is confidential. Though we do not actively collate data around HE student usage in this service, the service is available to all students including HE.

The College creates and maintains a range of opportunities within which students and staff engage in discussions that aim to bring about demonstrable enhancement of the educational experience. These include: student representatives system, focus group meetings, staff and student committee meetings (or equivalent) conducted by the collaborative university partners, participation at the meetings, participation in the NSS survey and course/module survey.

The College is committed to participation in pre-entry activities to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds to enter HE by actively engaging in recruiting students from the socio-economic and postal codes groups (cold spots) with low level of progression to HE**.** This was achieved through the following initiatives:

- Active participation as a member of the National (Merseyside) Network for Collaborative Outreach (MNCO) to maximise recruitment and promotion of the HE provision and offer a range of events and short programmes, including taster events, promotional HE events, open days and internal progression to HE events to promote access to HE. As a member of the network the College is engaging with schools and other colleges within Greater Merseyside with a Single Point of Contact (SPoC) to signpost teachers and advisors to relevant outreach activities at each of the 11 partner organisations;
- Offering internal progression bursaries and support for those FE leavers within the College who would not initially engage with HE progression opportunities;
- Close monitoring of student numbers applying, being offered a place, accepting and enrolling onto the College's HE programmes, including students from disadvantaged backgrounds and those students~~:~~ with disabilities, learning difficulties, BAME and Socio-Economic (deprived postcode areas and cold spots) and engaging with proactive promotional activities where the application/access levels were behind set targets.

The College has achieved targets set in the Access Agreement in relation to the key priorities:

1. The College recruits a significantly higher proportion of students from areas of
   i. low HE participation (Polar3 Q1,Q2),

   ii. low socioeconomic status than nationally.
2. The proportion of students from a low socio economic background is significantly higher than nationally.
   i. local students are included in the analyses as the College's HE programmes recruit predominantly local students, (69% in 15/16; 75% in 16/17) who reside within the Liverpool City Region
3. The proportion of recruited HE students of particular ethnicities is broadly in line with the national benchmark data for students with other (including mixed) ethnicities, but lower for black and Asian groups. However, this is still higher than the proportion of BAME population in the Liverpool City Region (Population by Ethnic Group 2011, Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census).
4. The College recruits a higher proportion of mature students than nationally.
5. There is a higher proportion of disabled students than nationally, with access to HE provision with the College.
6. The ratio of male/ female students is in a better balance than the national level ratios.

All access measures and activities are effective and support targets of continuing positive recruitment from underrepresented groups.

Evidence and impact of initiatives aimed at preparing students for further study and research, graduate employability and enterprise and entrepreneurship

Initiatives start with the College's Employability and Enterprise Policy. It details what the College offers students to support access to work experience and work-related activity, to build their employability and enterprise skills, and ensure they have a competitive advantage in the local labour market.

Positive impact of these initiatives is measured with the extended and well established links with employers in informing curriculum development, in order to ensure relevance, validity and currency of the programme.

The embedding of employability within the curriculum is evident through the development of relevant skills, knowledge and work-relevant learning and assessment. The promotion and support for enhancing employability is a strong area of provision across all programmes. Employability is built into all of the induction programmes. A dedicated VLE employability HE page includes materials, information and links to jobs and support via Prospects web.

As well as a range of career talks organised by individual curriculum teams, students also have access to a range of visiting experts who deliver information on diversifying their careers and about the wide range of opportunities available in their specific field. Work placement information is made available to students and employers, clarifying arrangements, roles and expectations in the form of handbooks and web-based information supporting productive relationships with employers, which are designed to enhance and support student employability.

Career enhancement and progression for mature students

The College provides employability and progression events that are run throughout the year and include progression talks and one-to-one support through the personal tutorial system.

Evidence of longer-term employment outcomes and progression of graduates, including into highly-skilled employment, is evident from the TEF matrix data. The College enterprise initiatives are cross-curricular and aim to engage enterprising students in starting their own businesses and freelancing, including initial ideas sharing, step-by-step support and masterclasses. The enterprise activities have had a direct impact on students' employability skills and on their business start-up opportunities including the following:

- A broader range of creative entrepreneurship workshops are offered as part of the enterprise project, which includes Be A Blogger and Be A Musician within the first term;
- Funding is made available for students to support them in developing full business plans (The Start Up Fund);
- Freelancing and self-employment opportunities are presented at induction programme;
- Students attend enterprise events including the National Student Enterprise Conference**;**
- In response to students saying they needed space outside of home and class to work, not only on writing business plans, but also on the practical aspects of their business, the College has invested in a new co-working space;
- Performing Arts students are currently working with The Everyman Playhouse Theatre, Tmesis Theatre Company and with a number of other theatre companies. All of the current student cohort are on placements within the industry. The College has employer links with Everyman and Playhouse Theatre and employs the director of the Everyman's' Youth Theatre who is enabling students to gain full insight into industry demands.
- A FD Travel and Tourism student has set up in the events management business.
- In the last 12 years many of our FD Dental Technology students have been promoted to senior roles within the dental laboratories through employment or from starting their own dental business. 90% of graduates are registered with the General Dental Council as Dental Care Professionals.
- All students on the HNC/HND Sports Coaching and Exercise Science programme are involved in enterprise as sports coaches with various specialisms involving both grassroots and performance level sport. Students on the HND Sports Coaching and Exercise programme are involved in delivering PPA cover in primary schools and specialised sports coaching to youth participants. The majority of students on the final year of the BA (Hons) Sports Coaching degree programme are in employment in the sports industry. One student runs a sports massage therapy business, other students are involved in the education sector and a few volunteer as teaching assistants or are employed as PE teachers.
- A group of Music Production HE students started their own record company
- A group of Performing Arts students started their own dance company
- A number of Acting, Photography, and Fashion graduates are working as self-employed/free lancing

The College HE provision offers high level of teaching intensity with a small average FT class size and high numbers of contact hours, see Appendix 6. Our high grades profile is good and at stable levels over the past three years. The College high grades profile is presented in the Appendix 6.

Student Engagement in the Submission

This TEF document was shared with all HE students via their course representatives. Student course representatives were asked to review the content of this report and to provide feedback. The feedback received from some of the HE curriculum areas and student groups, via their elected student representatives, has informed the content of this submission.

APPENDIX 1: HE in house student survey (based on NSS questions) results

Number and % of respondents:		
16-17	330 of total eligible 611	54.01%
17-18	369 of total eligible 513	71.93%
18-19	421 of total eligible 478	88.08%

Q	Question	16-17 Agree	17-18 Agree	18-19 Agree
1	Staff are good at explaining things	95	95	93
2	Staff have made the subject interesting	95	93	92
3	The course is intellectually stimulating	94	92	92
4	My course has challenged me to achieve my best work	95	93	93
	Staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching	-		
5	My course has provided me with opportunities to explore ideas or concepts in depth	97	95	94
6	My course has provided me with opportunities to bring information and ideas together from different topics	96	95	95
7	My course has provided me with opportunities to apply what I have learnt	95	95	93
8	The criteria used in marking has been clear in advance	92	89	89
9	Marking and assessment have been fair	97	98	95
10	Feedback on my work has been timely	94	95	90
11	I have received helpful comments on my work	94	96	94
	Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand	-		
12	I have been able to contact staff when I needed to	94	96	95
13	I have received sufficient advice and guidance in relation to my course	96	96	92
14	Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices on my course	96	94	93
15	The course is well organised and running smoothly	89	81	86
16	The timetable works efficiently for me	94	90	92
17	Any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively	93	91	91
18	The IT resources and facilities provided have supported my learning well	92	85	85
	I have been able to access general IT resources when I needed to	-		
19	The library resources (e.g. books, online services and learning spaces) have supported my learning well	86	82	84
	The library resources and services are good enough for my needs	-		
20	I have been able to access course-specific resources (e.g. equipment, facilities, software, collections) when I needed to	91	87	91
	The course has helped me to present myself with confidence	-		
	My communication skills have improved	-		
	As a result of the course, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems	-		
21	I feel part of a community of staff and students	93	92	90
22	I have had the right opportunities to work with other students as part of my course	97	96	95
23	I have had the right opportunities to provide feedback on my course	95	93	93
24	Staff value students' views and opinions about the course	95	94	94
25	It is clear how students' feedback on the course has been acted on	88	84	87
26	The students' union effectively represents students' academic interests	87	84	88
27	**Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the course**	**96**	**92**	**91**

APPENDIX 2: DLHE / graduate employability: 3 years data FT collected by the College

***FT* programmes destinations 2014/15- Total number of graduates: 235; response rate 93%**

Employment	Further Study	Unknown/Other	TOTAL
91	57	12	160
57%	**36%**	**7%**	**100%**

***FT* programmes destinations 2015/16 - Total number of graduates: 224; Response rate: 91%**

Employment	Further Study	Unknown/Other	TOTAL
58	82	15	155
37%	**53%**	**10%**	**100%**

***FT* programmes destinations 2016/17 - Total number of graduates: 246; Response rate: 93%**

Employment	Further Study	Unknown/Other	TOTAL
61	113	18	192
32%	**59%**	**9%**	**100%**

APPENDIX 3: Retention and achievement of HE leavers (16-17, 17-18)

Year	Leavers Overall	Achievement Overall %	Retention Overall %
16/17	482	91.1	84.2
17/18	423	94.3	87.5

APPENDIX 4: OTL

2015-16 OTLs %		2016-17 OTLs %		2017-18 OTL %	
Effective	93%	Effective	*85%*	Effective	92%
Practice Needs Development	7%	Practice Needs Development	*15%*	Practice Needs Development	8%

Observation topics HE 18-19

Subcategory Description	A strength %	Require Improvement %
Questioning	30%	10%
Stretch & Challenge	92%	8%
Co-operative Learning	40%	0%
Differentiation	92%	8%
Pace	92%	8%
Links to Employability	100%	0%
Use of Technology	100%	0%

APPENDIX 5: Staff qualifications

Total number of College staff teaching on HE programmes in 18/19: 63

Highest Level of Qualification in 18-19				Teaching Qualifications	
PHD	MA/MSc	BA/BSc	Other high level qual.	PGCE	Working towards
6	24	45	23	60	2

APPENDIX 6: GLH and average class sizes/high grades

Academic Year *FT Programmes*	Average Class Size	Average GLH	High Grades
16-17	12	466	55%
17-18	12	439	54%
18-19	12	448	55%